

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENTI 03577 101603 Z

45

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 IO-12 DPW-01 SS-15 PM-09 NSC-10 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 L-03 RSR-01 /077 W

----- 026373

R 101205 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4049

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 3577

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, MOPS, PFOR, LA

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH LPF SPECIAL ADVISOR PHOUMI VONGVICHIT

SUMMARY: ON MAY 10, CHARGE HAD 90- MINUTE MEETING WITH LPF SPECIAL ADVISOR PHOUMI, PRIMARILY TO DISCUSS MIA MATTERS. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION, PHOUMI REITERATED THAT FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT, NEUTRALIZATION OF LUANG PRABANG AND VIENTIANE, AND ALL MILITARY PROBLEMS MUST BE RESOLVED AT SAME TIME. PHOUMI CONFIRMED THAT LPF IS INSISTING ON RECEIVING VICE PRIME MINISTERSHIP. IT WAS CLEAR THAT PHOUMI WAS NOT IN A COMPROMISING MOOD AND THAT EARLY PROGRESS IN LAO NEGOTIATIONS IS NOT LIKELY. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCOMPANIED BY CONSUL RAND, I CALLED ON LPF SPECIAL ADVISOR PHOUMI VONGVICHIT ON MAY 10. PHOUMI WAS ACCOMPANIED BY LPF VIENTIANE REPRESENTATIVE SOTH PHETRASI WHO TOOK NOTES DURING THE MEETING. MOST OF THE MEETING WAS DEVOTED TO OUR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON MIAS AND TO REQUESTING LPF ASSISTANCE IN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 VIENTI 03577 101603 Z

CLARIFYING FATE OF PORTER AIRCRAFT WITH AMERICAN PILOT ABOARD WHICH HAS BEEN MISSING SINCE MAY 7 IN THE BOUAM LONG AREA. DISCUSSION ON MIAS AND MISSING AIRCRAFT IS REPORTED SEPTEL.

2. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, PHOUMI URGED THAT USG BRING ITS INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON RLG TO CONCLUDE POLITICAL AND MILITARY PROTOCOL IMPLEMENTING VIENTIANE FEBRUARY AGREEMENT. I AVAILED MYSELF OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE PHOUMI COPY OF PRESIDENT' S ANNUAL REPORT DEALING WITH LAOS. I POINTED OUT THAT PRESIDENT' S REPORT WELCOMES VIENTIANE AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN RLG AND LPF AND THAT USG CONTINUES TO SUPPORT PRIME MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA' S EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE PEACE IN LAOS. I POINTED OUT THAT NEGOTIATIONS WERE BETWEEN RLG AND LPF BUT THAT IT APPEARED TO ME FROM WHAT I KNEW OF NEGOTIATIONS THAT LPF WANTED RLG TO ACCEDE TO ITS POSITION ON ALL POINTS AND THAT IT WAS NOT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT RLG PROTOCOLS WHICH IT HAD TABLED.

3. I THEN SUGGESTED THAT IN VIEW OF SEVERE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY LAO PARTIES IN AGREEING ON ALL OUTSTANDING POLITICAL AND MILITARY PROBLEMS, THE TWO SIDES SHOULD TRY TO SETTLE ONE ISSUE AT A TIME AND IMPLEMENT FORTHWITH THOSE SUBJECTS ON WHICH AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED. I SAID THAT THE VIENTIANE AGREEMENT HAD SET A DEFINITE TIME PERIOD (THIRTY DAYS AFTER SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT) FOR THE FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT AND THAT THIS SUBJECT SHOULD BE THE FIRST PROBLEM RESOLVED BY THE RLG AND LPF. I LINKED THE FORMATION OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDING SECURITY FOR THE LPF MINISTERS, BUT SUGGESTED THAT DISPUTED MILITARY ISSUES SUCH AS DEMARCATION LINE AND THE ROLE OF THE ICC BE POSTPONED UNTIL COALITION GOVERNMENT FORMED.

4. PHOUMI WENT INTO A LONG HARANGUE ON HOW THE LPF HAD BEEN RECEIVED IN THE PREVIOUS TWO EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION (1958 AND 1962) AND ON THE BASIS OF THAT EXPERIENCE, HE BELIEVES THE PROBLEM OF IMPLEMENTING THE VIENTIANE AGREEMENT IS INDIVISIBLE. HENCE, HE SAID, FORMATION OF COALITION GOVERNMENT, NEUTRALIZATION OF LUANG PRABANG AND VIENTIANE, AND ALL MILITARY PROBLEMS MUST BE RESOLVED AT THE SAME TIME. THIS IS WHAT HE IS TRYING TO DO IN GETTING RLG TO AGREE ON A SINGLE PROTOCOL WHICH RESOLVES POLITICAL AND MILITARY ISSUES NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED IN THE VIENTIANE FEBRUARY AGREEMENT. IN REPLY TO MY QUESTION, PHOUMI SAID HE WOULD STAY IN VIENTIANE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 VIENTI 03577 101603 Z

UNTIL HE IS CONVINCED NO FURTHER PROGRESS CAN BE MADE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. ONLY THEN WOULD HE RETURN TO SAM NEUA.

5. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS PHOUMI SUGGESTED THAT AS A SIGN OF SINCERITY IN IMPLEMENTING VIENTIANE AGREEMENT, USG STOP BOMBING LAOS. I STRONGLY REJECTED THIS ACCUSATION, POINTING OUT THAT US HAD ONLY BOMBED LAOS TWICE SINCE CEASEFIRE, PAKSONG ON FEBRUARY

23 AND THA VIENG ON APRIL 16 AND 17, BOTH TIMES IN RESPONSE TO AN RLG REQUEST TO PUNISH A FLAGRANT ENEMY VIOLATION OF THE CEASE-FIRE. PHOUMI DACKED OFF A BIT AT THIS POINT, STATING THAT USG FURNISHED T-28' S DROPPING AMERICAN SUPPLIED BOMBS ARE CONTINUING TO OPERATE IN LAOS IN VIOLATION OF CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT. HE CLAIMED THAT SOME OF THE T-28' S ARE UNMARKED AND DO NOT CARRY LAO EMBLEM. I REPLIED THAT T-28' S ARE LAO- OWNED PLANES, FLOWN BY LAO PILOTS AND THAT THEIR ACTIVITY WAS USUALLY IN REPLY TO FAR GROUND REQUESTS TO SUPPORT THEM AGAINST ENEMY INITIATED ATTACKS WHICH ARE CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS. SINCE PHOUMI HAD SPECIFICALLY REFERRED TO T-28 STRIKES AT BAN KEUANG PHAK IN MR I, I REPLIED THAT INITIAL CEASEFIRE VIOLATION OCCURRED BY PATHET LAO AT THAT SITE AND THAT FRIENDLY TROOPS, SUPPORTED BY RLAF PLANES, WERE MERELY REACTING TO LPF PROVOCATION.

6. SINCE AT THIS POINT THE CONVERSATION, WHICH HAD
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